

QA-603
Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane
Chester vicinity
Queen Anne's County

Constructed 1880; altered circa 1980
Private

Located approximately one-and-one-third of a mile south of Chester, on Kent Island in Queen Anne's County, the Denny-Legg Farmhouse is situated in the midst of a 200-acre farm. The house faces north towards extensive agricultural fields. It is a two-story, five-bay, side-gable dwelling, with a one-story, hipped-roofed garage attached to its east end via a one-story, gable-roofed hyphen. A one-story, flat-roofed, enclosed sun porch projects from the west elevation of the main block, and a two-story, gable-roofed rear ell extends from the south (rear) elevation. Two non-historic outbuildings stand southeast of the house.

The Denny-Legg Farmhouse displays some characteristics of a typical I-house, with its symmetrical façade, two stories, single-pile form, side-gable roof, end chimneys, and rear ell. Both nationally and in Queen Anne's County, I-houses were a common form in rural areas from the mid-nineteenth century through the first years of the twentieth century, and many are still extant in the county. Significantly renovated in the late 1970s in the Colonial Revival mode, the Denny-Legg Farmhouse provides no evidence of its appearance when it was the residence of William H. Legg in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-603

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic

other Denny-Legg Farmhouse (preferred), Denny Valley Point Farm (current)

2. Location

street and number 200 Denny Farm Lane not for publication

city, town Chester, MD 21619-2236 ☒ vicinity

county Queen Anne's County

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name William E., III and Joyce C. Denny

street and number PO Box 246 telephone

city, town Stevensville state MD zip code 21666-0246

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Queen Anne's County liber MWM 224 folio 349

city, town Centreville tax map 57 tax parcel 59 tax ID number 04-011309

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> domestic	0 structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0 objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	1 Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
			0

7. Description

Inventory No. QA-603

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered

Summary

Located approximately one-and-one-third of a mile south of Chester, on Kent Island in Queen Anne's County, the Denny-Legg Farmhouse is situated in the midst of a 200-acre farm. The house faces north towards extensive agricultural fields. It is a two-story, five-bay, side-gable dwelling, with a one-story, hipped-roofed garage attached to its east end via a one-story, gable-roofed hyphen. A one-story, flat-roofed, enclosed sun porch projects from the west elevation of the main block, and a two-story, gable-roofed rear ell extends from the south (rear) elevation. Two non-historic outbuildings stand southeast of the house.

Primary Resource Exterior Description

The Denny-Legg Farmhouse is located approximately one-and-one-third of a mile south of Chester on Cox Neck, part of Kent Island in Queen Anne's County. The house is located on Denny Farm Lane, a gravel farm lane that leads east from Cox Neck Road for almost one-quarter of a mile to a small parking area about 20 yards west of the house. The lane then turns south and curves around the house to a poured concrete parking pad situated in front of the house's garage, located on the east end of the house. An electric fence runs alongside the south side of the farm lane. Facing north towards extensive agricultural fields, the two-story, frame dwelling is situated on a small rise. A wide, grassy lawn lies immediately in front of the house, with mature trees along the lawn's east and west sides. A large copse of trees is situated south of the house, across the farm lane. A medium-sized farm pond is located west of the house and south of Denny Farm Lane. A circa 2000 barn is located approximately 35 yards southeast of the house, and is surrounded by a wood rail fence that also lines the east side of the house's lawn. A circa 1990 gazebo is located about 35 feet southeast of the house.

The Denny-Legg Farmhouse has a two-story, five-bay, side-gable main block, with a one-story, hipped-roofed garage attached to its east end via a one-story, gable-roof hyphen. A one-story, flat-roofed, enclosed sun porch projects from the west elevation of the main block, and a two-story, gable-roofed rear ell extends from the south (rear) elevation. The main block's foundation was not visible at the time of survey, but the ell originally rested upon a brick pier foundation, now infilled with newer brick. The house's exterior was substantially altered circa 1980 by the addition of new materials, including a brick-veneer water table; masonite weatherboards; vinyl windows and doors throughout; a Colonial Revival door and window surrounds; wood roof shingles; and reconstructed brick chimneys. At the same time, significant additions were made to the house: a sunporch on the west end of the house; a garage on the east end of the house; and a two-story, frame, infill section between the ell and the main block.

The main block's symmetrical five-bay façade (north elevation) features a set of two, eight-over-twelve, double-hung, vinyl windows flanking the centered entry on each side. The five second-story windows match those in the first story. Two arched, two-over-two, wood windows located in both the east and west gables of the main block, as well as in the south gable of the rear ell, appear to be original. The boxed, vinyl cornice is a replacement; its configuration, with cornice returns, appears to be original.

The interior of the house was not documented at the time of the survey; the owner stated that it had been completely altered during the circa 1980 renovation.

8. Significance

Inventory No. QA-603

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates 1880; altered circa 1980

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register☐ Maryland Register☒ not evaluated

Summary Statement of Significance

The Denny-Legg Farmhouse displays some characteristics of a typical I-house, with its symmetrical façade, two stories, single-pile form, side-gable roof, end chimneys, and rear ell. Both nationally and in Queen Anne's County, I-houses were a common form in rural areas from the mid-nineteenth century through the first years of the twentieth century, and many are still extant in the county. Significantly renovated in the late 1970s in the Colonial Revival mode, the Denny-Legg Farmhouse provides no evidence of its appearance when it was the residence of William H. Legg in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Historical Narrative

In 1857, William H. Legg purchased 47 acres of farmland known as Bentons Pleasure.¹ In 1866 and 1877, his residence on the property (later known as the Denny-Legg Farmhouse) was located at the north end of a small creek that flowed into Crab Alley Creek.² In 1866, William acquired a contiguous, 137-acre farm called Oak Hill from the court-ordered sale of his brother Henry C. Legg's land. The resulting property was slightly larger than the average Queen Anne's County farm.³

According to the Queen Anne's County tax assessment records, the Denny-Legg Farmhouse was constructed in 1880. The house's location on the site of the earlier William H. Legg residence indicates that the house may have an earlier construction date. More likely, though, the 1880 house either replaced or added to the 1860s Legg dwelling. The Denny-Legg Farmhouse displays some characteristics of an I-house, with its symmetrical façade, two stories, single-pile form, side-gable roof, end chimneys, and rear ell. A typical I-house is a two- to two-and-one-half-story, single-pile, side-gabled dwelling. I-houses generally display a center-hall plan, with two rooms on either side of a central stair hall, a condition reflected in their typically symmetrical facades with a center entry. I-houses frequently exhibit a rear ell that provided space for the kitchen and other service spaces. In Queen Anne's County, I-houses often feature a centered front gable on the facade. Reflecting nation-wide trends, the I-house form was common among rural residences in Queen Anne's County from the mid-nineteenth century through the first years of the twentieth century, and many are still extant.

It is likely that Legg's farm produced grain and some type of fruit during the late nineteenth century. Situated on Crab Alley Creek, the William H. Legg farm may have had a private wharf, as did many farms on Queen Anne's County's bays and rivers, in order to provide immediate access for sea-going ships to transport the farm's produce to market in Baltimore or other destinations. During the second half of the nineteenth century, wheat and corn were the chief crops being raised in Queen Anne's County, and Eastern Shore

¹ See attached chain of title for this and all subsequent deed references.

² J.G. Strong's *Map of Queen Anne's County* (n.p.: J.G. Strong, 1866); *An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, Md.* (Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing & Stevenson, 1877).

³ 1860 to 1890 Federal Censuses, *Historical Census Browser* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, 2004), accessed 11 October 2007, <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>>. The average size varied from 211 acres in 1860 to 174 acres in 1890.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 200 acres
Acreage of historical setting approximately 200 acres
Quadrangle name Kent Island

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000 (7.5 minute)

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property boundary is defined by the current parcel boundaries shown on tax map 57, grid 20, parcel 59 in Queen Anne's County, Maryland.

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Evelyn D. Causey, Ph.D., Senior Historian, and Gerald M. Maready, Jr., Architectural Historian		
organization	History Matters, LLC	date	November 16, 2007
street & number	1502 21 st Street, NW, 2 nd Floor	telephone	(202) 223-8845
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of

Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-603

Name: Denny-Legg Farmhouse
Continuation Sheet

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farms were known for the fine bloodlines of their herds of cattle, horses, and flocks of sheep.⁴ By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, Eastern Shore grain farmers had difficulty competing with the Great Plains states for the national market, so farmers increasingly turned to fruit production. The soil of Queen Anne's County was particularly suited for raising peaches, but other fruits such as pears, apples, and berries proved profitable. In 1891, the county shipped approximately 100,000 baskets and boxes of peaches, 20,000 baskets of pears, and 5,000 crates of strawberries and blackberries.⁵ In addition to the canning operations that developed in the county, the fruit was transported by rail and steamboat to the nearby market of Baltimore. No outbuildings surviving from the nineteenth-century period of farm operations.

In 1896, S. Lavinia Jones purchased the farm at a public auction after Legg defaulted on his mortgage. Jones lived with her brother, James E. Kirwan,⁶ and she bequeathed the property to him upon her death in 1933. A former oyster boat captain and Maryland State Senator, James E. Kirwan (1848-1938) was a prominent landowner on Kent Island, and he operated a store (QA- 550, James E. Kirwan House and Store) on Crab Alley Neck.⁷ From 1896 until the mid-twentieth century, when the property was sold out of the Kirwan family, the farm was operated by tenants. Renting farmland was common practice in Queen Anne's County in the first half of the twentieth century. Tenants farmed more than twice as much land as owners did in the first two decades of the century, and they continued to farm more acreage than owners up to 1950. Most tenant farmers in the county were white.⁸

No farm outbuildings survive from the first half of the twentieth century to indicate what was being produced on the property. According to the current owner, William E. Denny, his father purchased the property for him in 1951 when Denny was studying to be a dairy farmer,⁹ so the property may have been involved in dairy production. After World War I, prices for wheat and corn dropped, so Maryland farmers diversified their crops and increased dairy production.¹⁰ Between 1880 and 1920, the number of dairy cattle in Queen Anne's County nearly tripled,¹¹ which altered the agricultural landscape in the county with the addition of dairy barns with silos for cattle feed and milking sheds to store the milk. The presence of the railroad and the increasing development and improvement of roads in the 1920s provided ready access for transporting the milk to market. During the 1930s and 1940s, the trend toward the mechanization of agriculture meant that milk production changed from hand milking to milking by machine. Milk cooperatives purchased pipeline, tanks and other equipment and rented it to farmers who could not afford their own equipment for a percentage of the monthly income from milk production.¹² The result was an increase in milk production in Queen Anne's County from 1,688,434 gallons in 1920 to 7,077,561 gallons in 1945.¹³

⁴ J. Thomas Scharf, *The Natural & Industrial Resources and Advantages of Maryland* (Annapolis, MD: C.H. Baughman & Co., State Printers, 1892), pp. 85, 98.

⁵ Scharf, p. 96.

⁶ 1900 U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, District 4, Enumeration District 63, Sheet 15; 1920 U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, District 4, Enumeration District 78, Sheet 3-B.

⁷ See QA-550, QA-551, QA-589, QA-608; promotional brochure for the Kirwan House Museum. Kirwan was elected to the Maryland State Senate in 1900 and 1904.

⁸ 1910 to 1950 Federal Censuses, *Historical Census Browser* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, 2004), accessed 11 October 2007, <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>>.

⁹ Conversation with William E. Denny on June 5, 2007.

¹⁰ Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland: A Middle Temperament 1634-1980* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), pp. 460-461.

¹¹ 1880 and 1920 Federal Censuses, *Historical Census Browser* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, 2004), accessed 11 October 2007, <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>>.

¹² "Queen Anne's County Tricentennial: Celebrating 300 Years of Queen Anne's County History," *Bay Times*, April 5, 2006, p 11.

¹³ 1920 Federal Census, United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Fourteenth Census of the United States, State Compendium, *Maryland* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924), p. 59; 1945 Federal Census, United States

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In the late 1970s, under William E. Denny's ownership, the house was significantly renovated in the Colonial Revival mode. This renovation – along with the house's atypically long façade – presents an ambiguous image that is neither wholly new nor definably historic.

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Chain of Title

12 December 1984

William E. Denny III to William E. Denny III & Joyce C. Denny
Liber MWM 224, folio 349

Tract composed of several tracts of land now comprising one farm called "The Charles Edward Kirwan Farm", "The William Henry Legg Farm: or "S. Lavinia Jones Farm"; east side of Coxes Neck Road; 185 acres

28 December 1979

William E. & Ida G. Denny to William E. Denny, III
Liber MWM 158, folio 777
185 acres

15 September 1951

Mary Marguerite Lewis & Francis Earl Lewis (husband) of Baltimore (but as of deed of Queen Anne's County) to William E. & Ida G. Denny
Liber TSP 2, folio 570

Farm called...and being composed of parts of tracts earlier known as "Oak Hill," "Adventure," "George's Cod," "Addition to Upper Blunt's Point," "Benton's Pleasure," "Benton's Discovery"; located in Coxes Neck...about 1.5 miles south of Chester; 185 acres.

20 February 1945

Charles Edward Kirwan (decd) bequest to Mary Marguerite Kirwan Lewis
Liber TSP 2, folio 570
Subject to life estate in Maggie G. Kirwan (wife of Charles and mother of Mary); Maggie died 18 Nov. 1944.

23 February 1938

James E. Kirwan (decd) bequest to Charles Edward Kirwan (son)
Liber TSP 2, folio 570
Bequest under name of "The William Henry Legg Farm"

3 October 1933

S. Lavinia Jones (decd) bequest to James E. Kirwan
Liber TSP 2, folio 570
Will Book WTB 3: 443

21 September 1896

John B. Brown & Edwin H. Brown attys to S. Lavinia Jones
Liber WHC 5, folio 111
Power of sale in mortgage from William Henry & Marietta Legg to Louise Eds Fisher 12/17/1887; property sold at public sale to S. Lavinia Jones on 20 May 1893.
Land called "Oak Hill" but formerly called "Addition to Upper Point," "Adventure," and "Georges Cod"
200 acres

24 November 1866

John C. Tolson, Commissioner, to William Henry Legg
Liber SED 2, folio 495
Court ordered sale of Henry C. Legg land called "Oak Hill" but formerly ...
137 acres, 1 rood & 2 perches

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16 April 1857

Edward & Ann E. Hopkins to William H. Legg

Liber JP 3, folio 294

Land known by names of Bentons Pleasure and Bentons Discovery; 47 acres, 3 roods & 13 perches

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name: Denny-Legg Farmhouse
Continuation Sheet

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Major Bibliographical References

1860 to 1950 Federal Censuses. *Historical Census Browser*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, 2004. Accessed 11 October 2007. <<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>>.

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1945 Federal Census. United States Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Vol. 1, Part 14, *Delaware, Maryland, and District of Columbia*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1946.

Brugger, Robert J. *Maryland: A Middle Temperament 1634-1980*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

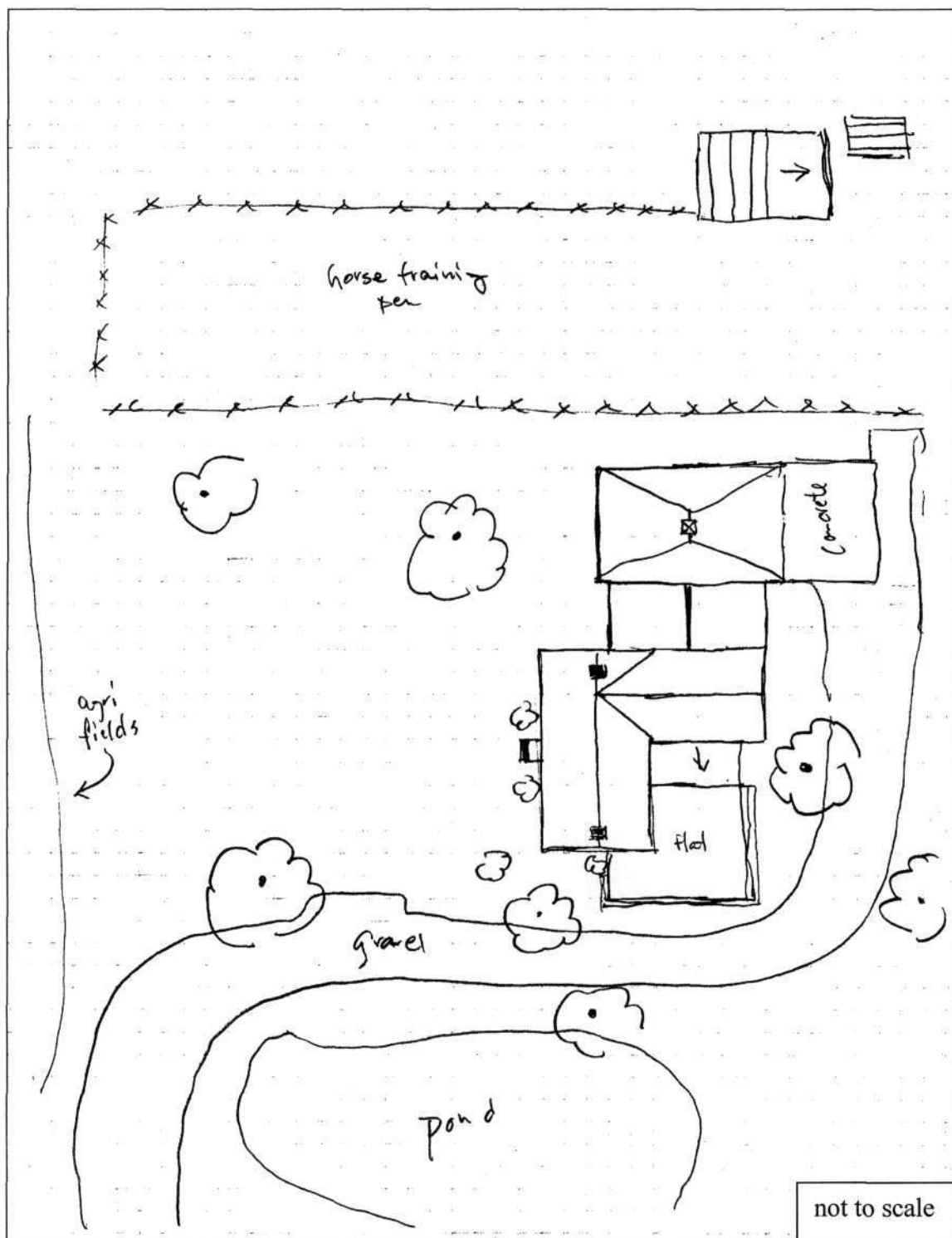
An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, MD. Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing & Stevenson, 1877.

J.G. Strong's Map of Queen Anne's County. N.p.: J.G. Strong, 1866.

"Queen Anne's County Tricentennial: Celebrating 300 Years of Queen Anne's County History." *Bay Times*, April 5, 2006.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *The Natural & Industrial Resources and Advantages of Maryland*. Annapolis, MD: C.H. Baughman & Co., State Printers, 1892.

U.S. Population Census, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, 1900, 1920.

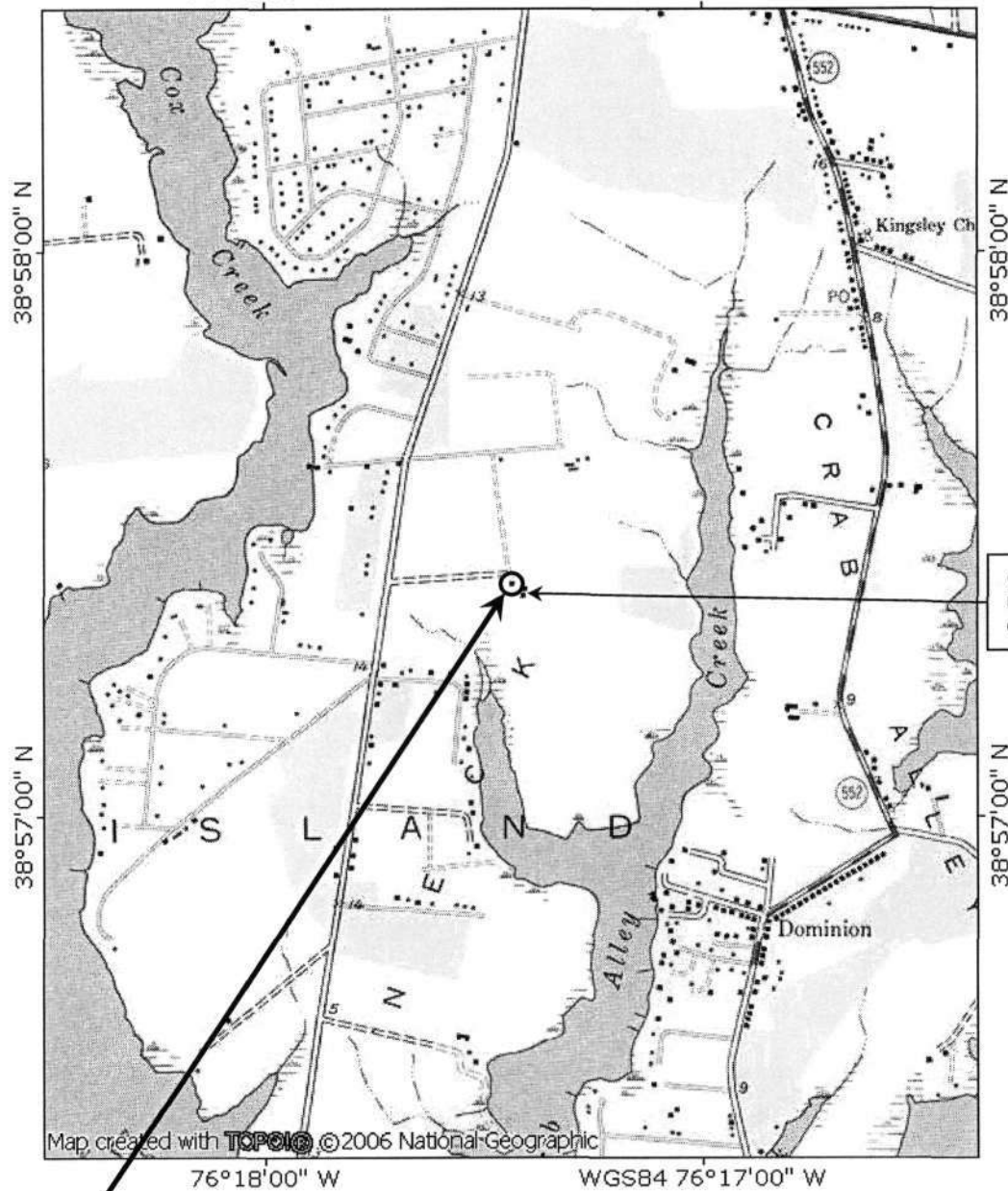


Site Plan
QA-603
Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane
Cox Neck vicinity
Queen Anne's County, Maryland

USGS Kent Island Quadrangle Map, Maryland, 7.5 Minute Series (Topographic)

76°18'00" W

WGS84 76°17'00" W



38°58'00" N

38°58'00" N

38°57'00" N

38°57'00" N

outbuildings
no longer
extant

Map created with TOPO © 2006 National Geographic

76°18'00" W

WGS84 76°17'00" W

QA-603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane
Chester vicinity
Queen Anne's County

0.0 0.5 1.0 miles
0.0 0.5 1.0 1.5 km

MN ↑ T
11°

08/13/07



QA-603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse

200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

6/2007

Maryland SHPO

Facade (north elevation)

1 of 7



QA-603
Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters LLC
6/2007
Maryland SHPO
Looking SE
2 of 7



QA-603
Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters, LLC
6/2007
Maryland SHPO
West elevation
3 of 7



QA-1603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity
Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

6/2007

Maryland SHPO

West + South elevations, Looking NE

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QA-603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity
Queen Anne's County, MD
History Matters, LLC

6/2007

Maryland SHPO

South elevation, house + attached garage, looking NW

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QA-603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse
200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity
Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

6/2007

Maryland SHPO

North elevation, looking SW

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QA-603

Denny-Legg Farmhouse

200 Denny Farm Lane, Stevensville vicinity

Queen Anne's County, MD

History Matters, LLC

6/2007

Maryland SHPO

Barns, west elevations

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